

## Abstract 544

**TITLE:** Redefining HIV Prevention Strategies for Women

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**ISSUE:** The need for increased prevention services for women, especially women of color, has been clearly demonstrated and stated in research. Yet, these reports have failed to translate into any substantial change in HIV/AIDS prevention policy as there are still very few prevention services which specifically target women. Current HIV prevention policy lumps women into the "Other" category. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently released a press kit titled "Complacency in HIV Prevention," which reports on the major presentations of the 1998 World AIDS Conference in Geneva. Despite concern expressed over the rapid increase of AIDS cases among women, not one of the 20 issues and research papers presented in the press kit addressed the need for increased prevention services for women. The great disconnect between the epidemiology of HIV incidence and prevention is at a crisis point. The time to end complacency regarding women and HIV/AIDS is here.

**SETTING:** The focus of this report is on women, especially women of color, young women, and women at high risk of HIV infection.

**PROJECT:** The Women and Children's Workgroup of the New York City Prevention Planning Group worked over the past year to develop a recommendation report for improving HIV/AIDS prevention funding for programs designed for and specifically targeting women, especially young women and women of color.

**RESULTS:** The workgroup has identified issues that put women at particularly high risk of HIV/AIDS and offer a series of recommendations for developing effective and comprehensive prevention plans. HIV prevention messages have been ineffective due to many reasons, such as: lack of risk perception in women, lack of HIV prevention as a priority, lack of access to care, lack of prevention messages targeting women, and lack of support services required for HIV prevention among women.

**LESSONS LEARNED:** In order to address the growing need for effective HIV prevention for women, the paradigm on which HIV prevention interventions are created requires revision and redefining. This presentation will discuss the special HIV prevention needs of women, provide some direction for future program and policy activities, and call for the convening of a national leadership task force to spearhead these efforts.

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